

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

Rev. Thomas Creigh, D. D.

READ BEFORE THE

PRESBYTERY OF CARLISLE.

PREPARED BY

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE

AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

CHAMBERSBURG, PA.;
FRANKLIN REPOSITORY PRINTER,
1881.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF REV. THOMAS CREIGH, D. D.

It is the custom of the Presbytery of Carlisle to have a biographical sketch of each deceased member prepared and recorded in a book kept for that purpose.

In accordance with this practice the following pages were prepared:

The permanence which "the art preservative" insures and the desire expressed by many friends to have a copy of these reminiscences must be the apology, if any be needed, for allowing this report to appear in print.

The committee appointed by Presbytery to prepare a biographical sketch of the late Rev. Thomas Creigh, D. D., would respectfully submit the following as their report:

The subject of this biographical sketch was born in Landisburg, Perry county, Pa., September 9th, 1808; and was the son of Dr. John and Eleanor Dunbar Creigh.

His paternal ancestors had emigrated from Germany to Scotland near the beginning of the 17th century to escape religious persecution to which Protestants were at that time subjected in the former country. Toward the close of

the same century a branch of the Creigh family, like many of the native Scots, passed over into Ireland, and settled in the county of Antrim. The records of the church of Carmony, near Belfast, which are still extant, show that both the great-great-grandfather and the grand-father of Dr. Creigh were ruling elders in that church. As such the name of the former is mentioned in 1719 and of the latter in 1740.

John Creigh, the grand-father of Dr. Thomas Creigh, removed from Ireland to this country in 1761, landing at Philadelphia May 19th. Soon after, he permanently settled at Carlisle. Bringing with him his certificate from Carmony, he identified himself with the church at Carlisle, and subsequently became a ruling elder in it; which office he filled at the time of his death in 1813.

John Creigh, the father of Thomas Creigh, was born at Carlisle in 1773; passed through Dickinson College, graduating in 1792 with high honor, though but a youth of nineteen; and studied the profession of medicine, graduating in the University of Penn-

sylvania in 1795.

The young physician was married to Eleanor Dunbar, daughter of John Dunbar, who was also a ruling elder in the church of Carlisle; and whose father, William Dunbar, had come from Scotland in 1730 and soon after settled at Carlisle.

After brief tentative residences elsewhere (Pittsburgh and Lewistown), Dr. John Creigh, in 1799, permanently located in Landisburg, Perry county, then embraced in Cumberland county. Here he resided twenty years; and not only was he successful, but became eminent in the practice of his profession. He was the father of ten children (six sons and four daughters), of whom Thomas was the seventh. But three of this large family survive: Hon. John D. Creigh, of San Francisco, Dr. Alfred Creigh, of Washington, Pa., and Miss Ellen Creigh, of Mercersburg, Pa.

The childhood and early boyhood of Thomas were spent in his native place; of which he carried vivid recollections and cherished fond memories down to the close of life, as shown by his brief autobiography. In long after years he loved at times, when seeking relaxation and rest, to get back to Landisburg and mingle with the Linns, and the Divens, and the McClures, and the Moons, and the Heddings, and the Wingarts—friends of his father, and his friends also; for he was one of those quiet, sedate, earnest boys who make friends among grown people.

There was then no Presbyterian church at Landisburg. It was not organized till 1823. Centre church, six miles distant, up the valley, was the

place to which families of that faith not only from Landisburg, but even four or five miles further down Sherman's valley, were wont to repair for the worship of God.

The Rev. John Linn, whose name is identified with the early history of Perry county, was then the pastor; and at his hands Thomas Creigh received the ordinance of baptism in infancy.

He speaks of himself as having been at the period of which we write, of a very domestic disposition, preferring to spend his time at home with his mother—at her side or near her—rather than in out-door pastimes with boys of his age. He was studious, as well, and fond of books; and even before the removal of the family from Landisburg, when he was eleven years old, he had made proficiency in the rudiments of a good English education.

Dr. John Creigh was influenced by two considerations to make a change of residence. 1st; he was not able to endure the exposure and fatigue connected with his extensive practice in Perry county, scattered, as it was, over a large territory. But 2d, and mainly, providing for the education of his children pressed sorely upon him. There were no adequate facilities at hand, and to send them from home involved too heavy an expense. Hence he removed to Carlisle in May, 1819; where he continued to reside in the enjoyment of a large practice, and highly esteemed, till the time of his death, November 7th, 1848, at the age of 75. Mrs. Creigh survived her husband, and continued to reside on the old mansion in Carlisle till August 11th, 1861, when, at the ripe age

—87, she peacefully passed away.

In the entry made in Dr. Creigh's diary on that occasion, we see all the tenderness and fondness of that love for a mother which characterized his boyhood, beautifying and adorning the man of mature years and gray hairs. After speaking of the hope and comfort experienced in the midst of sorrow, he adds: "But it is a mother who has been taken from us, and in the taking, the old nest is broken up—the family members have no place they can call their home in common—the key-stone of the arch is fallen." Touching and fitting words to fall from the pen of Dr. Creigh!

Thomas spent the three years which immediately followed his father's removal to Carlisle in the common school of the place, principally under the tuition of Mr. Henry Wales, of whom the pupil speaks in terms of high regard. The next two years were spent in the Grammar school, then and for a number of years after a noted feature of Dickinson College. In the fall of 1824 he entered the Freshman class in college. The institution was then under the presidency of Dr. Neil and among its students were many whose names are familiar in the Presbyterian church. It is one of the strange things that this college, located where it is and with its previous history, should ever have been permitted to pass out of Presbyterian hands. And we have sometimes thought there is some danger of God's foolish Presbyterian people permitting history to repeat itself elsewhere in this noble valley.

During the latter part of his college

course the student passed through those religious experiences which led to a full surrender to and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. The work was deep and thorough. The change was complete. The stand on the Lord's side was taken. On the 10th of May 1828 he united by profession of faith with the Presbyterian church, of which there was but one at that time in Carlisle.

On the 28th of September the same year he was graduated. There were twenty-one in his class; and eight of these devoted themselves to the work of the ministry. Before graduating his mind was definitely made up as to his future course. Before he entertained the hope of being a christian he had resolved that if God should make him a child of his that he would, if the way were clear, serve him in the ministry. I can do no better than give the language of Dr. Creigh himself relating to this period of his life and this all important question. He says: "Having now as I hoped, experienced a change of heart, and having devoted myself to him in covenant to be his only, and having passed through a regular course of learning, and hoping that I might have some little talent which would enable me to cultivate some corner in his vineyard, I did not hesitate to give myself up to a course of preparation for this great work. I trembled in view of it, but I knew the grace of God was all-sufficient. I had a strong, an earnest desire to enter upon it and I felt that it was the Lord which had produced within me these desires. I was therefore hedged up to this course, I could not do anything else. I think too, as far as I knew my own heart, my

motives were honest—not such as spring from a deceived heart, but are of the Lord.

Having thus determined the question of preparing myself for the work of the ministry, I entered upon my studies soon after my graduation in Sept. 1828, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. (Dr.) Duffield of Carlisle." Thus his studies were mainly prosecuted under his pastor, though he spent the winter of 1829-30 in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Dr. Creigh has often been heard to speak of the many advantages attendant upon the old method of studying under a pastor, whilst he was not insensible to the manifest disadvantages. It is not unlike the case of the student of law or medicine with his preceptor, where he is brought in constant contact with the every day practical things of the profession which he has selected for his life-work and for which he is preparing.

As illustrative of this point in Dr. Creigh's own case, we may refer to that wonderful work of grace with which the church at Carlisle was visited during the winter of 1830-31. What a schooling he here received for the work of dealing with souls, to which he was called of God and upon which he was soon to enter as a minister.

On the 12th of April 1831 he was licensed by the Presbytery of Carlisle, then in session at Newville. Rev. Joseph Mahon, a member of this Presbytery, and Rev. Robert Davidson, D. D., who died April 6, 1876, were licensed at the same time.

The summer after his licensure was spent mainly at home, prosecuting his

studies and preaching part of the time for Dr. Duffield's congregation during the pastor's absence for a few weeks.

Upper West Conococheague congregation had been left without a pastor by the resignation of Rev. David Elliott, D. D., who had served them with equal ability and acceptance for a period of seventeen years. This occurred Oct. 27, 1829; when he accepted a call to become pastor of the church at Washington, Pa. Presbytery made an appointment for the young licentiate to preach there the 7th of August 1831, which he filled, preaching in the morning at the "White church," two miles from the town of Mercersburg, and in the evening in town. For his text in the morning he had Isaiah 55: 1 "Ho! every one that thirsteth, &c.," and in the evening, John 3: 17 "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn, &c." He remained at Mercersburg till the following Friday, when he passed over the mountains (on horse-back) to Wells Valley where he preached by appointment of Presbytery on Sabbath the 14th. Returning to Licking Creek (Green Hill) he preached Sabbath evening, and next morning rode to Campbellstown (St. Thomas) 22 miles in time to preach for Rev. John McKnight, who had been holding a communion service there Sabbath.

He says: "what were the results of that excursion eternity alone can tell." And so it proved. For the impression made on the minds of the people at Mercersburg by his preaching and his acquaintance was most favorable; and the session wrote him an urgent invitation to return and preach again. This

he did, though with great reluctance and much misgiving. During his first visit he heard Dr. King and Dr. Elliott so often referred to and quoted, and then he thought of the venerable men—strong men—that were there and of his own youth and inexperience, and he hesitated. Nor can we wonder. But, as was his custom in important matters, he consulted Dr. Duffield, whom he speaks of in this connection as his venerated friend and pastor. The Dr's reply to difficulties and objections stated was characteristic: Thomas, it may be the call of God. Take care what you do. It may be with you as it was with Jonah." He went.

For years after the people of Mercersburg were wont to speak of the youthful appearance, the modesty and even diffidence, but earnestness and zeal, as well, of the young preacher at that time. He was then twenty-three years of age and had the appearance of being even younger.

But he was not the only preacher there the day of his second visit. Nor were the admiration and praise of the people bestowed on him alone. By a strange, shall we say providence, or shall we say blunder of the session, another was invited to be there and preach at the same time—one who, after he had been heard, had many admirers and warm friends among the people, and who, had he been there alone, would, in all probability, have become their pastor. I refer to that venerable and venerated man, the Rev. James C. Watson, D.D., who so recently was called from the midst of his active labors to his reward scarcely less sud-

denly than was Dr. Creigh.

The morning service that day was in the country church; and there the two licentiates met. Neither had fault to find with the other, and they arranged that Mr. Watson should preach first, and Mr. Creigh follow, after the usual intermission.

Mr. Creigh's text was, "As I live saith the Lord God I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked &c." In the evening he preached in the town of Mercersburg from 1 John 5:5, "Who is he that overcometh the world &c."—

In his journal Dr. Creigh says: "If Mr. Watson had known we were both invited, he would not have been there; and if I had known, I would not have been there."

But the Chief Shepherd had his place and work for each. In his providence he pointed to the youthful Creigh as the under-shepherd for this flock, and directed the youthful Watson to another field of labor in the bounds of the same Presbytery where gifts and talents of a high order were likewise called for, and where he did a good work—viz: to Gettysburg.

Between the two men thus thrown together for the first time (we believe), there existed a life-long friendship. United in the bonds of christian and ministerial friendship in life, they were not long separated in death. When Dr. Creigh passed away the friendly feeling did not cease in his family. For, Dr. Watson having lost his entire library in the burning of Milton last spring, the wife and children of Dr. Creigh, after their loved husband and father was taken from them, had in their hearts to

present to Dr. Watson a valuable portion of his library. But ere the purpose could be carried out the Master bade him too "come up higher," where knowledge comes not through the intervention of books nor is only in "part," and where seeing is no longer "through a glass darkly," but "face to face."

Shortly after this second visit of Mr. Creigh to Mercersburg, viz: on the 19th of September, a congregational meeting was held and an election for pastor was entered into. The vote lay between Creigh and Watson, the former having the majority. After the first ballot the vote was made unanimous.

Accordingly a call was made, and presented to Presbytery at its session in Carlisle, Sept. 27, and was accepted by Mr. Creigh.

The minister who presided at the congregational meeting and moderated the call, the Rev. R. McCachran of Newville, still moves amongst us, respected and loved by all. He is the oldest member of Presbytery, alike in years and in the ministry.

The ordination and installation of Mr. Creigh took place in the church in town on the 17th of November 1831; on which occasion Rev. John McKnight preached the sermon, Rev. Henry R. Wilson, D. D., offered the ordaining prayer and Rev. Robert Kennedy presided and gave the charges to the pastor and the congregation.

In his historic discourse, delivered in July 1876, Dr. Creigh tells of the cordial welcome he received, as he at once entered upon his work. And to the honor of that church through all the succeeding years of a long pastorate he adds;

"As it was with the fathers and mothers so has it been with all who have come after them." Delightful testimony! reflecting credit and honor alike upon those concerning whom it is borne and the man who for well nigh half a century was able to go in and out before them, challenging the admiration, commanding the respect and confidence and winning and holding the sincere love of all classes—the aged and the young, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the white and the colored. Of him it may be truly said, he was no respecter of persons.

It was but a few months after his settlement that he was permitted to rejoice in the manifest evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the congregation, in his reviving, awakening and converting power. This work of grace commenced in Feb. 1832 and extended through almost the entire year. In conducting the services connected with it he was not without the aid of able and experienced men, such as Wilson, McKnight, Williamson, Duffield, Kennedy, Knox. But at such a time no one can take the place of a pastor in mingling with and ministering alike to those inquiring the way of life and those but newly born into the kingdom. And here it is we see the importance of the schooling the young pastor had received during the revival in the church at Carlisle one year before, in which he had actively participated, while prosecuting his studies under his pastor.

This revival afforded great encouragement to the pastor and gave a new impulse to the church. Before it the

roll of the church showed a membership of two hundred and fifty. Before the close of the year, as its fruits, were added one hundred and seven on profession of their faith. Nor was this all, or perhaps the most important. With the reviving of God's people there came new consecration, new zeal, new activity, new power. And thus was the whole church prepared at the very outset of his ministry to go forward with him in what proved to be his life-work. One of the subjects of this work devoted himself to the ministry and is now the loved and honored pastor of the 1st Church Washington, Pa. I refer to the Rev. James I. Brownson, D. D.

On the 14th of Feb. 1833, Mr. Creigh was married to Ann Hunter Jacobs, daughter of James O and Margaret Jacobs, of ———, Lancaster county, Pa., who at once entered very heartily into the church and work of her husband. But this union was of short duration. A constitution naturally not strong, yielded to the insidious inroads of disease, and she passed away from loved ones on the 16th of October 1836. She left behind her two little children. The older of these, John, never enjoyed robust health. He died in the Christian hope April 16, 1861. James Jacobs, the younger of them, was graduated in Marshall College in the fall of 1851, studied law with Hon. John Hickman, West Chester, Pa., where he located himself in the practice of his profession. Here he united with the Prot. Episcopal church—the church of his uncle, Thomas Jacobs, with whom he made his home, as it had been of his mother before marriage. During the Rebellion

he served in 1st Reg't of the Pennsylvania Reserves till it was disbanded. Subsequent to this he studied for the ministry in the Episcopal church; and is now (Oct. 1880) Rector of the church at Conshohocken, Pa.

On the 29th of Nov. 1837 Mr. Creigh was married to Jane M., daughter of Joseph and Jane Grubb of Mercersburg. By this union he was the father of four children, two of whom survive him—Thomas Alfred, a druggist in Omaha, Nebraska, and Elie Dunbar who, with her widowed mother resides in the old home at Mercersburg. Joseph Brainard the oldest of this family of children—a gentle, lovely, manly christian character—was a druggist and had established himself in business in his native town. But with opening manhood disease fastened on him, and in his father's home he faded and passed away, May 28, 1862, like the leaf before its season. But the sorrow in that house was not that which is without hope. Willie the youngest of the three sons, around whom the tendrils of the father's heart seemed to have entwined themselves with peculiar strength and tenderness was taken away ere his presence had gladdened the hearts of parents and brothers to five brief years. The writer was then (April 1847), a student at Mercersburg, where in Dr. Creigh and his wife he had found warm friends, and ever a cordial welcome in their lovely home. Never shall he forget the shadow which fell on that household when Willie was taken from it. Dr. Creigh regarded it as one of the darkest and most trying providences that ever fell to his lot, reading it, as he then did, in the

light of the present. But afterwards, when he read it in the light of the past, he understood it all. God was leading him in a way which he knew not. Soon after this, a wide-spread malignant disease fell upon the children of his congregation; and few indeed were the households in which there was not weeping and lamentation, because some loved one was not. Then it was he understood how God had been schooling him by his own deep sorrows to sympathise with those in like sorrow; and by that support and consolation which had come to his own soul, to be the bearer of consolation and comfort to the stricken hearts and homes of his flock.

Before turning aside to the personal and family history of Dr. Creigh just given, we were speaking of the revival of the winter of 1831-1832.

Unlike what so often occurs in the history of so-called revivals, this one was not followed by a season of spiritual dearth and deadness; and this is one of the best evidences of its genuineness. On the contrary, as we look over the church register, we find that during the ensuing ten years, 1833-1842 inclusive, there were added to the communicant membership two hundred and eight, making an average of almost twenty-one per year.

In the winter of 1842-1843 the church and pastor were permitted to rejoice in another season of refreshing; as a result of which thirty-six persons were received to the communion of the church on profession of their faith and eight on certificate. Two of those making a profession of their faith devoted themselves to the work of the ministry—John W.

McCune and Hezekiah Hanson.

Another fruit, as we take it, of this revived state of the church, was the remodeling, rearranging and beautifying of the church in town; which hitherto had been cheerless, uncomfortable and unprepossessing—being unpainted, uncarpeted and without vestibule or portico.

At the time of which we now write there were many Presbyterian students in attendance at Marshall College, then located at Mercersburg. On Sabbaths the eastern side gallery of the church was mainly occupied by them and—especially at night—their fellow-students. These were all ardently attached to Dr. Creigh, and his influence over them was of the most salutary character. Almost half a score of those who were there at that time entered the ministry in our church; and two of them went abroad as missionaries D. A. Wilson to Africa, and D. Elliott Campbell to India, where he fell during the Sepoy Rebellion. It may truthfully be said that no man had more fully the respect, esteem and confidence of the students than had Dr. Creigh. Nor was he insensible of the aid he received from those identified with the Presbyterian church. In his diary where he mentions the departure of several of them at a time, he adds: "I shall very greatly miss them." Changes of this kind together with the many changes taking place in the congregation gave him no little discouragement at times.

But though thus sometimes cast down he was never forsaken. The Lord smiled upon his labors and raised up others to fill vacancies that had been occasioned. This was the case the year after the

foregoing record was made, when (1850) he was pleased to pour out his spirit and again revive his work.

And so throughout the remainder of his ministry God continued to bless and prosper the work committed to his hand. Few indeed were the communion occasions on which some were not added to the church, and as late as the winter and spring of 1876 the pastor, now venerable in years and feeling that his work must be well-nigh done, was made to rejoice in a season of more than ordinary spiritual interest.

Dr. Creigh was not a man of very rugged constitution, and hence suffered frequent indisposition. It was seldom however, that this was permitted to prevent his meeting engagements or attending to his public ministrations. Many were the times he left his bed and went to the pulpit, and then back again to his couch to suffer perhaps for days. And not unfrequently on such occasions, when his nervous system was highly wrought up, were his words of touching tenderness and stirring power. Many too were the times he has left his bed to go to the bedside of the afflicted members of his flock, or the house of mourning. Is it any wonder such a pastor was enthroned in the hearts of his people. There will he continue to live, embalmed and cherished in grateful remembrance through long years to come. Nor need his successor be surprised if oft-times he should hear the name of Creigh pronounced with loving accent, as he before had heard those of King and Elliott. Nor should he fail to appreciate it and love the people for it.

On several occasions he was compelled

on account of the state of his health, to desist for a time from his labor. This was notably the case in the summer of 1847, when he gave up his work for several months, which he spent mainly traveling in the west; and in the years 1868 and 1869.

So impaired was his health at this latter period that at the April meeting of Presbytery 1868 he tendered his resignation as pastor, and the usual citation was served upon the congregation. But instead of acquiescing in the request for the dissolution of a relation which had so long and so happily existed, they resolved to resist it to the utmost, and to make arrangements by which Dr. Creigh could have absolute release from charge of the congregation and rest for six months or a year. Their commissioners appeared at the meeting of Presbytery in June 10th following and made known the action of the congregation; whereupon Presbytery recommended Dr. Creigh to withdraw his request for a dissolution of the pastoral relation, which he did.

Until the next stated meeting of Presbytery his pulpit was supplied by members appointed at the request of the session, during the fall and winter of 1868-69 by the Rev. Alexander S. Foster; and from June 20 to Sept. 9, 1869, by Mr Samuel L. Johnson, a licenciate of the Presbytery. At the expiration of Mr. Johnson's engagement, who had another year to spend in the Theological Seminary, Dr. Creigh was sufficiently restored in health to resume the charge of his congregation. From this time forward his labors knew almost no interruption till the summons came to

cease from them and enter on the unending rest.

When Dr. Creigh settled as pastor of Upper West Conococheague congregation one half the preaching service was had in town and the other half in the country, at "Church Hill," or the "White Church," as it was called. Owing to changes in the country by removals to town and more especially to the west only one third of the time was given to the country church after December 1843. These changes continuing to go on, the population in the neighborhood of the church becoming mainly German and the White church becoming dilapidated and unfit for occupancy, the congregation abandoned it entirely, as a place of worship, in 1855, and all the time from that on was given to the town.

Attached as his flock were to him, Dr. Creigh received at various times many tokens of kind regard. But all others were eclipsed by the generous, nay munificent, deed of Mr. Josiah McDowell, a member of his church, who in Oct. 1867 left him a legacy of a farm containing over 200 acres of prime limestone land and a two story brick house and lot in town. Dr. Creigh conveyed the latter to the trustees of the church for the use of the sexton. This gift of Mr. McDowell was most opportune. It came at a time, it will be remembered, when, owing to the impaired health and other causes the pastor's heart was somewhat cast down; and he recognized in it the hand of a kind Providence. At the time of his settlement his salary was but \$600. And though from time to time additions were made to it, till it reached

\$1,000, it never was adequate to his support. By this munificent gift, however, ample provision was made for him and his, whether he should be permitted to go on with his work or be compelled to desist.

Dr. Creigh was justly regarded as a man of deep, earnest piety—a man of consecration and of prayer, who communed much with God and walked by faith. In the early days of his ministry (Feb. 13, 1837) we find traced in his journal, in his characteristically beautiful hand, these words, which, it seems to us, give the key note to his entire life: "Four things to which—through divine grace—I will conform my thoughts and life (1) To be impressed and always to act under the solemn truth that 'thou God seest me.' (2) To spend more time in prayer, meditation on his word and communion with God. (3) Not to consult my own personal views and feelings in regard to any plans or duties, but how will it affect the cause of Christ—the glory of God. (4) Not to speak anything in the absence of a fellow creature that I would be ashamed or afraid to say in his presence."

And God did give him the coveted grace thus to live, to whom be all the praise, and honor and glory.

As a preacher he was deservedly held in high repute. He may be said to have been both doctrinal and practical. He was thoroughly scriptural. His aim was to "preach the word." He believed that sound doctrine lay at the foundation of all correct christian living. Hence it was his habit to keep back nothing that was profitable, but to preach the whole truth. But especially

did he delight to dwell upon God's redeeming grace and hold up the Lord Jesus Christ as an object of faith and the only ground of a sinner's hope.

In delivery, his manner was simple, unostentatious, natural, and whilst he aimed at none of the embellishments of oratory, he was earnest, impressive and oft times eloquent in the highest sense of the word. In listening to him one could not fail to be impressed with his ambassadorial character—standing, and in Christ's stead, beseeching men to be reconciled to God; or pointing believers to the comfort and consolation which are treasured up in our sympathizing advocate and friend.

He was specially gifted in prayer. So much was he in communion with God, on the one hand, as the daily habit of his life, and so thoroughly in sympathy with his people, on the other hand, that the very wants of the people seemed to find utterance through him at the mercy seat as he led them in the sanctuary.

In his theological views he was thoroughly orthodox, and equally fearless in his maintenance of what he believed to be the truth. At the same time, however, he had enlarged and catholic views and was ever ready to recognize and co operate with his fellow ministers and christians of other denominations in every good word and work. Though decided and pronounced as an old school-man, when the rupture took place in the Presbyterian church, he was no less decided and pronounced in his views in favor of re-union when he saw that in the providence of God the hour for healing the breaches had arrived.

He was one of the best of pastors, attaching great importance to the pastoral office and work. Oft has he been heard to say that he believed that under God he was more indebted for whatever measure of success had attended his labors to his pastoral work than to anything else. No man could have been more faithful in carrying the gospel from house to house than was he. It was his custom every alternate fall and winter to visit all the families of his flock systematically; reading, praying, conversing personally with them. These visits were appreciated by the people, and the pastor always met a cordial welcome alike from old and young. The alternate fall and winter were occupied in holding district meetings for catechetical examinations and instruction. These meetings were attended by young and old, and all participated in the exercises of them. The children and youth were examined on some portion of the shorter catechism, and the adults on some previously announced portion of the confession of faith or form of church government. These were seasons of no slight interest and of great practical benefit. Here, we think, in large measure is the scent of the staid, substantial character of the Mercersburg congregation. They have been well indoctrinated in the standards of the church, and are *intelligently* attached to her doctrines and polity.

He felt and showed a deep interest in the colored portion of his congregation. A goodly number of this race had been identified with the church of Mercersburg from the commencement of its history—even when the relation of mas-

ter and slave still existed. In his preaching the wants and capacities of these people were not lost sight of, and in his pastoral work they were never neglected. Again and again in his diary does the faithful pastor speak of visits made to them in times of sickness or death, and again and again at the close of these entries is added the ejaculatory prayer in their behalf. During the war of the Rebellion many of these people fled and sought homes more remote from Mason and Dixon's Line.

Dr. Creigh's fondness of books was attested by his well stored library, which was to him not a thing of ornament but of use. His reading was general and extensive. Holding that the Bible is the only infallible source of divine truth and knowledge for us, he at the same time held that all arts, all sciences, all history; in a word all human knowledge may and, of right, should be laid under contribution in expounding, illustrating and enforcing the word of God.

The well-merited title of D. D. was conferred upon him by Lafayette College in 1853. It sat lightly on him and therefore was borne gracefully by him.

Dr. Creigh was most ardently attached to home and friends. No more affectionate, kind and considerate husband and father could anywhere be found. Much of his pleasure consisted in contributing to the welfare and happiness of loved ones. Few indeed, if any, were the years that passed without witnessing some addition or improvement about the house or premises, calculated to add comfort and convenience. Part of the last afternoon of his life was spent in superintending

some such improvement. Turn where you will on those premises, you will find some mark of his considerateness and care. What a loss to that household! And outside his own immediate family were friends who had a large place in his noble heart, and shared largely of his generous deeds. It will not soon be forgotten that to some he was as a father of the fatherless.

The estimation in which he was held in all the churches of the Presbytery, as well as in many beyond, was such as might well be coveted. Every where known, he was every where esteemed and loved. No man of our number was more frequently asked for when any special service was to be performed than was he. Many are the records scattered all through the minutes of our Presbytery of appointments on ordination and installation services—sermons to be preached or charges to be delivered. And on communion occasions, that pastor and that people who could have his services deemed themselves favored.

There was one neighboring church to which he sustained special relations and in which he felt specially interested—the old Welsh Run church. For a period of about ten years; 1860—1870, he statedly supplied its pulpit every third Sabbath during the summer and occasionally in the winter, with afternoon preaching. During this time he also performed for them the duties of a pastor in times of sickness or death. To him the congregation and the Presbytery are greatly debtors for his fostering care during these years of weakness, of struggle and of discouragement. He himself sometimes felt greatly discour-

aged in regard to the prospects and sometimes felt that they would be compelled to disband and give up the ground. But the little handful held on and he preached on.

There is an interesting fact in connection with this church which we would here place on record, which may not be generally known, viz; that to Dr. Creigh largely if not mainly is the Robert Kennedy memorial church indebted for the neat, beautiful and in every way suitable house of worship which they now occupy. One day during the sessions of the General Assembly of 1870, in Philadelphia, of which Dr. Creigh was a member, the Franklin county ministers were invited to dine at the house of Elias Davidson Kennedy, Esq., the only surviving son of Rev. Robert Kennedy, the former pastor of Welsh Run church. Rev. Wm. M. Paxton, D. D., of New York, was also made one of the party as an ex-Franklin county man. Before going to Mr. Kennedy's Dr. Creigh remarked, "I shall speak about Welsh Run and its wants to Mr. K. to-day. I believe he will do something to help them." Accordingly at the dinner table he did so, incidentally as it were, alluding to the dilapidated condition of the old church, the struggles of the congregation, the efforts they were making to raise funds for a new house of worship. That was enough. No solicitation of funds was needed. Mr. Kennedy's interest was awakened. Before we rose from the dinner table a servant had been dispatched for a book of designs in church architecture; and after dinner various designs were discussed. Dr. Creigh was told to go home and have

the Welsh Run people go forward and see what funds they could raise toward the erection of a new house of worship and then report to him. They raised what they could and reported. The church was erected after the plan selected by Mr. Kennedy, was furnished, was supplied with an organ; and the entire bill was paid by Mr. Kennedy; and, at his request, the funds raised by the congregation were used to secure a parsonage.

As a member of Presbytery and of Synod he was regular in attendance on their meetings, and actively participated in their proceedings. For, though retiring and unaccustomed to thrust himself forward into prominence, he never shrank or held back when duty was laid on him. He was wise, prudent, conciliatory. And what he said always commanded marked attention and respect, and carried with it great weight. Though naturally dignified in his bearing he was kind and courteous to all. He was especially thoughtful and considerate and kind in his intercourse and dealings with his younger brethren. What was said of Dr. Miller might with propriety have been said of him. For every where he was the "Christian gentleman." At the meetings of Presbytery which have occurred since his removal how frequently have we heard the exclamation: "How we do miss Dr. Creigh."

He was at all times the staunch friend of education: Education for the masses, and education in colleges and seminaries. Of late years he was particularly interested in woman's higher education, and had much to do in bringing

about the founding of Wilson College at Chambersburg. He was a charter member of the Board of Trustees, and when Dr. Tyron Edwards resigned the Presidency of the Board, Nov. 8th, 1872, Dr. Creigh was elected to fill the vacancy. He continued President to the close of life. His interest in the institution was of the deepest character. And his faith in its ultimate success remained unshaken, no difference how dark the day or how portentous the signs with reference to it. He believed he could see the hand of God in every step connected with its history; and, to use his own words, "That this College, founded in faith and prayer builded on the rock of divine truth, following the leadings of Providence," was destined to meet a felt want and prove a blessing and a power for good in the present and in the future.

Further, it is proper to say that Dr. Creigh was a man of more than ordinary public spirit. Whatever was of interest to the town or community was of interest to him; and he was ever ready by counsel, by influence, by means to help forward any enterprise which appeared to be of general or public interest. As instances we might cite the R. R., the Cemetery, the Bank, &c., to the success of which, and all kindred enterprises he largely contributed. He was truly a public spirited citizen. And in this regard as well as that which pertained to him as a minister of the gospel, he will be greatly missed.

In the troublous times through which we passed during the Rebellion, when he and his congregation were exposed to frequent annoyance and danger, he

was loyal to the core, and his trumpet was never heard to give an uncertain sound. By prayer, by speech, by influence, by two gallant sons given to the service, he contributed to maintain the government one and undivided.

In the providence of God he was not called to desist from his labors and pass through lingering and protracted illness, or experience the infirmities of old age ere his cause below terminated. He was spared all this. It was his high privilege to stand in his lot, doing his full work up to the very hour of his departure.

He had been in attendance at the meeting of Presbytery the week before and had taken an active part in its business. The members will not soon forget his words of cheer and encouragement and comfort at the meeting for devotional exercises, Thursday morning.

On Sabbath, the 18th of April, he preached in the morning from Mat. 25: 19—25. It was one of a series of sermons on the parable of the ten talents. In the evening he preached with even more than usual animation and power from Num. 14: 24, "But my servant Caleb, because he had another Spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land where unto he went."

His subject was, following the Lord fully. Fit subject with which to close a ministry and a pastorate of well nigh half a century! Fit subject on which to address a loved people whom he would have to follow the Lord fully to that land whither we are going!

In his diary he wrote that evening: "Another Sabbath nearly gone with all

its privileges and responsibilities. O to be prepared for the eternal Sabbath!"

Monday was spent mainly in reading. Tuesday he went to Greencastle by buggy and returned, making some pastoral calls by the way. Wednesday, the 21st, he spent part of the forenoon at the Reformed church, where a S.S. convention was in session. In the afternoon called on several sick persons in the congregation, and was for a time in the yard superintending the erection of a fence.

On account of the S. S. Convention above alluded to, he dispensed with his usual Wednesday evening lecture, in order to give the people opportunity to attend; and the evening was delightfully spent with his family, looking over the papers of the day and conversing on topics of mutual interest. At ten o'clock he conducted family worship and retired to his room. Shortly after lying down he was attacked with congestion of the lungs, caused by irregular action of the heart; and after an illness of but little more than half an hour he passed from the midst of all the activities of life, and all the near and dear relatives of life in the household, in the church, in the community to join the general assembly and church of the First-born in heaven.

But though the summons came suddenly, it did not come unexpectedly to him. For weeks and months he was apprehensive that his end was near and that it might come as it did. In his diary he writes: "How near I may be to the end of my pilgrimage the Lord only knows. It may be very near and sudden. So I often think it will be;

and hence, under this impression, I would put my hand in the hand of Jesus and would follow wherever he leads." Later he writes: "My shortness of breath continues and probably increases. It may bring about the end suddenly. May I be prepared for the issue, be it long or short, sudden or protracted. "All my springs are in thee," O, God. Into thy hands I commend my spirit. Living, I would live unto the Lord. Dying, I would die unto the Lord. Whenever the Lord calls me I can be spared; my work is done."

On the 1st of January, preceding the date of his death, he writes: "And now since I have entered on another New Year, would that it might be one of more entire consecration to my blessed Lord! It may be my last year on earth. I feel that the time of my departure is drawing near. It may take place soon and suddenly. Oh to be fully prepared for it."

In a letter to the writer of this sketch written just three weeks before the summons came, he says, in speaking of the state of his health: "The machine is wearing out, and no human means can renew it. And the Lord's lease is for 'three score and ten' only. We should therefore be submissive to the will of Him 'who doeth all things well'—have our work done and be prepared for his coming."

Thus standing in his lot—working, watching, waiting, he quickly, triumphantly passed from earth and entered into his rest.

WM. A. WEST,	} Committee.
JOHN C. CALDWELL,	
EBENEZER ERSKINE,	

